

Voyage Planning

A voyage plan is a written navigation guide used by a ship's bridge team to determine intended routes, to identify potential problems or hazards, and to adopt measures to ensure a safe passage. Voyage planning is an important part of bridge resource management because it prepares the bridge team to execute the ship's transit along an intended route. Through voyage planning the bridge team appraises risks and work load demands. Watch conditions (bridge team structures based on the environment in which the ship is operating) are thus considered in advance.

Voyage Planning Elements

As shown in the example on the back of this sheet, voyage planning includes, but is not limited to, reviewing and considering:

- ☐ Charts and navigational publications.
- ☐ Waterway characteristics, navigational obstructions, and water depths.
- ☐ Personal knowledge of areas to be transited from previous voyages.
- ☐ Ship characteristics.
- ☐ Notices to mariners and nautical publications.
- ☐ Applicable regulations, including VTS and pilotage requirements.
- ☐ Predicted weather, currents, and tides.
- ☐ Expected vessel traffic.
- ☐ Internal and external communication procedures.
- ☐ Tug escort or assist services.
- ☐ Emergency procedures.
- ☐ Engineering conditions.
- ☐ Anticipated watch conditions.

Once the above information has been reviewed and given due consideration, the navigation officer usually prepares the charts for the voyage and plots the ship's intended track. The charts are also marked to highlight information such as shoal areas, helm-over positions, critical bearings, points at which to change charts, and vessel traffic service call-in points. To avoid crowding the chart with information, it may be desirable to include some information in a notebook or on voyage plan forms (see example on the back of this sheet).

Verifying the Voyage Plan

It is good practice to have another deck officer check the voyage plan. The Master should also review and approve the plan. Finally, the Seafarer's Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Code states "...the planned route shall be clearly displayed on appropriate charts and shall be continuously available to the officer in charge of the watch, who shall verify each course to be followed prior to using it during the voyage." (STCW Code Section A-VIII/2 part 2)

The Voyage Plan and Pilotage Waters

It is important that the voyage plan cover the ship's entire intended route, *from berth to berth*. For some, this may differ from the past practice of planning a voyage from pilot station to pilot station. However, if the master or officer in charge of a watch is to meet his/her obligations for watchkeeping under the STCW Code, it is essential that he/she "maintain an accurate check of the ship's position and movement" as a complement to the assistance provided by the pilot (see STCW Code Section A-VIII/2 part 3-1).



ancy. If you have special accommodation needs, contact Mariann Cook Andrews at (360) 407-7211 (Voice) or (360) 407-6006 (TDD).

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Voyage Planning Checklist

Date: _____ Master's Name: _____ To: _____

In preparing the attached Voyage Plan the following publications were consulted: *(check those used)*

- ☐ U.S. Coast Pilot/Sailing Directions ☐ Tide Tables ☐ Radio Navigational Aids
☐ Local VTS Manual ☐ Tidal Current Tables ☐ Other _____
☐ Notice to Mariners ☐ Light List ☐ Other _____

- ◆ Above publications were each corrected through Notice to Mariners number _____
- ◆ _____ was not corrected. Reason: _____

Vessel tracklines are laid out on chart numbers _____

- ◆ Above charts were each corrected through Notice to Mariners number _____.
- ◆ Tracklines were checked by _____.

(NAME OF INDIVIDUAL)

Radio/electronic broadcasts consulted:

<input type="checkbox"/> Local Broadcast Notice to Mariners	<input type="checkbox"/> NAVTEX
<input type="checkbox"/> Weather Radio	<input type="checkbox"/> INMARSAT
<input type="checkbox"/> Weather Facsimile	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Pilots will be contacted _____ at approx. _____ by _____.

Tug escort(s) will be contacted _____ at approx. _____ by _____.

The vessel's destination berth/anchorage is _____. Depth of water will be _____ at low water.

Vessel's draft is _____ forward, _____ aft. Tidal range is _____.

The following standard emergency procedures have been reviewed:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire | <input type="checkbox"/> Steering Failure | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Evacuation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collision | <input type="checkbox"/> Engine Failure | <input type="checkbox"/> Man Overboard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grounding | <input type="checkbox"/> Pollution Incident | <input type="checkbox"/> Electrical Failure |

The Chief Engineer has been consulted regarding the following:

- ☐ Pre-Arrival Tests and Inspections ☐ Inoperable/Malfunctioning Systems ☐ Stability Considerations
☐ On-Going Maintenance Items ☐ Ballast Considerations ☐ Other _____

The following Navigation Officers and Bridge Team members have been briefed on this Voyage Plan:

(NAME)

(POSITION)

(MASTER'S SIGNATURE)

(DATE)

SHEET
NO:

Voyage Plan

Vessel Name:

Master: _____

Date:

Voyage No:

◆ From: _____

◆ To: _____

Position Recording Method:

☐ ELECTRONIC ☐ PAPER CHART

Gyro Compass Error:

9EM Checked:

CHART NUMBER	WAYPOINT			TRACKLINE					DISTANCE TO GO (TOTAL)	FIX FREQUENCY (MAX INTERVAL 15MIN)	PREFERRED FIX METHOD	TIDAL CURRENT	MASTER'S INSTRUCTIONS/ SPECIAL PROCEDURES/ HAZARDS OF SPECIAL CONCERN
	Ref. No.	Lat/ Long	ETA	Course of Advance	Speed of Advance	Distance to Waypoint	Min. Expected Depth						
										<div><input type="checkbox"/> Visual</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Radar</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> LORAN</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> GPS</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Other</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Flood</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Slack</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> LORAN</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Ebb</div> <div>SET: _____</div> <div>DRIFT: _____</div>		
										<div><input type="checkbox"/> Visual</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Radar</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> LORAN</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> GPS</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Other</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Flood</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Slack</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> LORAN</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Ebb</div> <div>SET: _____</div> <div>DRIFT: _____</div>		
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